

Purpose

The aim of this article is twofold. First, formulating an overarching task complexity framework incorporating and uniting all different views on and attributes of task complexity as formulated by earlier review articles. Secondly, as teams are often mobilized to tackle complex tasks, we aim to review literature on task complexity in teams to investigate which aspects are investigated and how they are measured.

Design/Methodology

To reach these aims, two systematic literature searches – both including six large databases – were conducted. The first search on task complexity delivered a total of 11 review articles from which 124 facets of task complexity were extracted and categorised by six independent researchers using a thematic analysis method. A search on task complexity in teams rendered 34 empirical articles.

Results

Through analysing the review articles, an integrative task complexity framework consisting of ten dimensions is proposed. Concerning our second search, present work reveals four broad types of measuring task complexity in a team environment. Moreover, most of this research focuses on the same one or two dimensions.

Limitations

Thematic analyses used to build the categories depend on judgement and insights of the researchers.

Research Implications

The results push towards reconsidering task complexity operationalizations in team research. Future research should make a well-considered instead of pragmatic choice on which task complexity dimensions to take into account. Moreover measurement instruments should to be re-evaluated, based on the proposed framework.

Originality/Value

Besides contributing to task complexity literature, this study investigates task complexity in the specific context of teams.